

### REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 24-41 are pending. Claims 24, 26 and 28-37 stand allowed.

The amendments are fully supported by the original disclosure and, thus, no new matter is added. New claims 38 and 40 are supported by Fig. 1a, which shows the 5' major splice donor (SD) at 985 and the gag initiation codon at 1054. New claims 39 and 41 are supported by page 13, lines 10-13, and page 15, lines 20-23, of the specification.

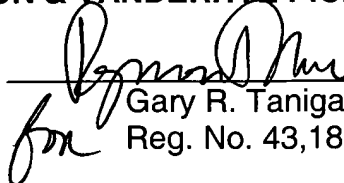
Claims 25 and 27 were rejected under Section 112, second paragraph, as allegedly indefinite. Applicants traverse. The phrase "the region" is deleted as this limitation is not required for patentability. Antecedent basis of the phrases "the 5' major splice donor site" and "the gag initiation codon" is corrected. One of ordinary skill in the art would recognize where these features of the SIV genome are located as its sequence has been determined and the organization of such features in a retrovirus (e.g., the locations of the 5' major splice donor site and the gag initiation codon relative to the packaging signal) is well known. Withdrawal of this rejection is requested.

Having fully responded to all of the pending objections and rejections contained in the pending Action, Applicants submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and earnestly solicit an early Notice to that effect. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if any further information is required.

Respectfully submitted,

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